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TO:	Commissioner for Patents	DATE:	July 12, 2006
FAX:	(571) 273-8300	Re:	END5208USNP USSN: 10/673,954
FROM:	Andy Ulmer on behalf of Gerry Gressel	No. of PAGES:	Including Cover Page: 11
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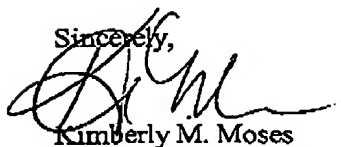
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Terminal Disclaimer(s)	_____	page(s)

Thank you for your help. Please contact me if you have problems with the transmission.

Sincerely,



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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/673,954	09/29/2003	Rudolph Nobis	END 5208	3795
2777	7590	03/17/2006	EXAMINER	
PHILIP S. JOHNSON JOHNSON & JOHNSON ONE JOHNSON & JOHNSON PLAZA NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ 08933-7003			GIBSON, ROY DEAN	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3739	

DATE MAILED: 03/17/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

RECEIVED
 MAR 20 2006
 I&J PAT. DKT. SECTION

JUL 12 2006

008/011

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/673,954	Applicant(s) NOBIS ET AL.	
	Examiner Roy D. Gibson	Art Unit 3739	

- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address -

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 December 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12, 14-16, 18 and 19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 10-12, 14 and 19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) 15-18 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-882) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>12/27/2005</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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DETAILED ACTION

The amendment filed 12/27/2005 is acknowledged. Because of the current rejections of previously allowed subject matter, this Office action is non-final.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 10-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Houser in view of Adams (6,632,227). Houser discloses all elements of the apparatus and an optional vacuum means for removing severed tissue to allow cutting and removal of tissue at several locations during a single procedure (col. 3, lines 28-32). However, the details of the vacuum means are not shown or described. But, Adams discloses a resection device for an endoscope (Figure 4a) wherein the apparatus is adapted to receive an endoscope therein or therethrough and wherein the tissue stop in the tip comprises a plurality of vacuum openings for drawing tissue into the side opening and inherently for removing tissue fragments (col. 5, lines 26-40). Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to look to the disclosure of Adams to provide the details of a vacuum means and an endoscope for the apparatus of Houser - - to draw the tissue into the side opening as an alternative equivalent means to providing a balloon opposite the side opening to force the

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apparatus over the tissue to be severed as detailed in col. 6, line 61-col. 7, line 6, and inherently remove tissue fragments under the observation of an internal endoscope.

Claims 14 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Adams in view of Hibner et al. (6,981,949). Adams discloses the method essentially as claimed, including the use of the endoscope disposed inward of the tissue stop, except for the cutting comprising providing RF energy (col. 2, lines 23-47 and col. 4, line 20-col. 5, line 40). But, Hibner et al. disclose a perimeter cut biopsy probe which additionally employs an energy source including RF to assist in cutting and cauterization the tissue (col. 9, lines 36-62). Therefore, at the time of the invention it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the device of Adams, as taught by Hibner et al., to provide RF energy to the cutting device to assist in the cutting of tissue and to further cauterize the tissue to prevent bleeding.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-9 are allowed.

Claims 15-18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

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Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Burbank et al. (5,775,333) disclose an apparatus for automated biopsy and collection of soft tissue, but does not specifically disclose RF energy used for cutting.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Roy D. Gibson whose telephone number is 571-272-4767. The examiner can normally be reached on Tu-Th, 7:30 am-4:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Linda Dvorak can be reached on 571-272-4764. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Roy D. Gibson
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3739

March 14, 2006